

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached "Replacement Sheet" of drawing includes changes to Figure 1.
The attached "Replacement Sheet", replaces the original sheet including Figure 1.

Upon the Examiner's approval of the proposed drawing changes, formalized drawings will be submitted in due course.

Attachment: 1 Replacement Sheet containing Fig. 1

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-9, 13-14, and 16 are now pending in the application. Claims 2, 5, 10-12, and 15 are cancelled. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

DRAWINGS

The drawings stand objected to for certain informalities. Applicants have attached a revised drawing for the Examiner's approval. In the "Replacement Sheet" Figure 1 has been amended to add reference numeral 10. This objection is now rendered moot.

SPECIFICATION

The specification stands objected to for certain informalities. Applicants submit amendments to paragraphs 0008, 0015, and 0016 to correct usage of certain reference numbers for consistency with the drawings. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 5 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

By this amendment, claim 5 is cancelled and claim 7 is amended to thereby render this rejection moot.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Machida et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5,782,089).

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 14, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170).

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Perrin et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,508,981).

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Brush et al (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0150518).

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Nagami et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5,952,109).

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Nilsson (WO 99/27240).

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Nilsson (WO 99/27240) and further in view of Brush et al (US Pub. No. 2002/0150518).

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Nilsson (WO 99/27240) and Brush et al (US Pub. No. 2002/0150518) and further in view of Nagami et al (US Pat. No. 5,952,109).

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (U.S. Pat. No.4,261,170) in view of Brush et al (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0150518).

In view of the extensive amendments made to claims 1 and 14, Applicant respectfully submits that the currently pending rejections have been rendered moot. However, to facilitate examination based on the substantially amended claims, Applicant would like to note the follow with regard to the cited references.

Applicant will focus the discussion on the references to Nilsson (WO 9927240) and Brush (US2002/0150518) as these were previously used to support a rejection under §103(a).

First with regard to Nilsson, the catalytic converter disclosed therein pertains to an assembly that is intended to be mounted directly to an engine block so as to take advantage of the rapid light-off temperatures afforded as the exhaust gas departs the cylinder heads.

As noted on page 2, lines 10+, the catalytic converters disclosed are mounted between the engine ports 11 in the engine block 10 and the manifold 12 such that the mantle is captured between the engine block and the manifold. Thus, there is no motivation provided under Nilsson for utilizing a mantle within a catalytic converter housing including a lip that is captured between the catalytic converter housing and an end cone as required under the present invention. Additionally, Applicant would like to note that the flange of Nilsson is clamped between the engine block and manifold via a bolt arrangement as opposed to capturing the mantle in a welded assembly as taught in the present invention.

With regard to the Brush reference, Applicant respectfully submits that Brush discloses a retainer ring disposed on the edge of a converter housing to facilitate a gas-type seal at the weld joint. As noted at paragraph 39 of the Brush reference, the inner

leg (wall) which is disposed within the converter housing is said to have a greater length than the second leg (wall) which is disposed over the edge of the converter housing. While no specific length dimensions are provided, it is clear from a review of the drawings under Brush, that the retainer ring is intended to be of relatively short length along the first and second walls and that the retainer ring is strictly intended to help facilitate a gas-type seal along the weld joint. The retainer ring is not intended in any way to maintain the catalytic converter components as does the hollow body portion of the mantle under the present invention.

Thus, unless additional references are cited upon review of the amended claims of the present application, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record is insufficient to support a rejection under §103(a) and is wholly unable to support an ongoing rejection under §102(b).

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner

believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: September 17, 2007

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